

## ***THE FOCUS MODEL***

Follow the steps below to apply the FOCUS Model in your organization.

Step 1: Identify a process that needs to be improved. Start with a simple problem to get the team up to speed with the FOCUS method. Then, when confidence is high, turn your attention to more complex processes. If the problem isn't obvious, use these questions to identify possible issues:

- What would our customers want us to improve?
- How can we improve quality?
- What processes don't work as efficiently as they could?
- What frustrates and irritates our team?
- What might happen in the future that could become a problem for us?

### *Step 2: Organize a Team*

Your next step is to assemble a team to address the problem. Where possible, bring together team members from a range of disciplines – this will give you a broad range of skills, perspectives, and experience to draw on. Keep in mind that a diverse team is more likely to find a creative solution than a group of people with the same outlook.

### *Step 3: Clarify the Problem*

Before the team can begin to solve the problem, you need to define it clearly and concisely. Try to break it down a bigger problem into smaller pieces that can be analyzed and solved more easily. Record the details in a problem statement. Focus on factual events and measurable conditions such as:

- Who does the problem affect?
- What has happened?
- Where is it occurring?
- When does it happen?

### *Step 4: Understand the Problem*

Once the problem statement has been completed, members of the team gather data about the problem to understand it more fully. Dedicate plenty of time to this stage, as this is where you will identify the fundamental steps in the process that, when changed, will bring about the biggest improvement. Consider what you know about the problem. Has anyone else tried to fix a similar problem before? If so, what happened, and what can you learn from this?

### *Step 5: Select a Solution*

The final stage in the process is to select a solution. You can use Decision tree for evaluating your options.

The model is helpful because it uses a team-based approach to problem solving and to business-process improvement, and this makes it particularly useful for solving cross-departmental process issues. Also, it encourages people to rely on objective data rather than on personal opinions, and this improves the quality of the outcome.